

Chapter 18 - Find Out My Mind 1



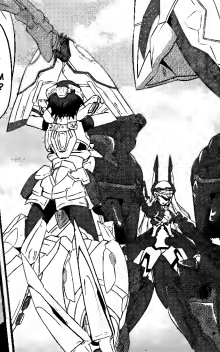
A FRONTAL
ASSAULT,
RIGHT FROM
THE START?

YOU'RE SO
PREDICTA-
BLE.



...
THANKS.

THIS IS
ALL I
KNOW
HOW TO
DO.



PAGING
CAPTAIN
OBVIOUS.



BYAKUSHIKI IS A
DEFECTIVE MODEL
BECAUSE OF ITS
INABILITY TO USE
ANY WEAPON
OTHER THAN THE
YUKIHIRA NIGATA
BLADE.



THE WORLD
WE LIVE IN
HAS EVOLVED
TO THE POINT
WHERE THE
GUN IS THE
KING OF
WAR.

NOWADAYS,
FACING THE
ENEMY ARMED
WITH NOTHING
BUT A SWORD
IS SUICIDE.





INSTEAD,
FOCUS ON
POLISHING
YOUR
STRENGTHS.

THERE'S
NO POINT
OBSESSING
OVER POWER
YOU DON'T
HAVE.



SUICIDE
...



THAT'S WHY,
SINCE ANCIENT
TIMES, THE
TITLE OF FIRST
SPEAR WAS A
GREAT HONOR
RESERVED FOR
ONLY THE
BRAVEST.

IT'S
THE MOST
DANGEROUS
DUTY SOME-
ONE CAN BE
GIVEN AND
REQUIRES
THE MOST
COURAGE.

IN WAR, IT'S
ABSOLUTELY
ESSENTIAL TO
HAVE SOMEONE
WHO IS CAPA-
BLE OF CUTTING
RIGHT THROUGH
ENEMY LINES
TO STRIKE AT
THEIR HEART.

BESIDES,



THE MOST
IMPORTANT
THING IS THE
COURAGE TO
MOVE FOR-
WARD!!

EVEN IF
I CAN'T
BE WHAT
CHIFUYU-
NEE ONCE
WAS,

I CAN
STILL BE THE
SWORD THAT
SIGNALS
A PATH TO
VICTORY FOR
MY FRIENDS.



AN IDIOT WHO
CHARGES IN
HEADFIRST IS
NOTHING TO
ME!!



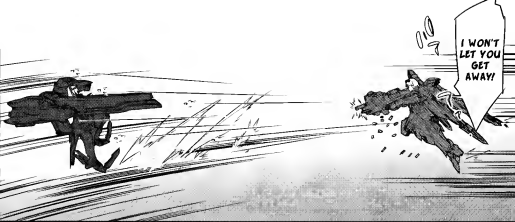
CHIFUYU-NEE
TOOK DOWN
THE WHOLE
WORLD WITH
JUST ONE
SWORD, OR
DID YOU
FORGET?



**YOU'RE
NOT
HER!!**

**KNOW
YOUR
PLACE
!!**









SO
WEAKLINGS
AREN'T EVEN
IN HER SIGHTS,
HUH...

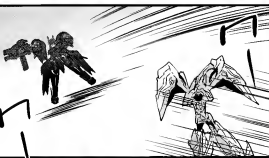
BODEWIG...
SHE SEES
ME AS NOTHING
BUT AN ANNOY-
ING PEBBLE IN
HER PATH.

IF I
JUST
HAD MY
OWN
IS...



LOOKS
LIKE SHE'S
SERIOUSLY
GOING TO
FIGHT BY
HERSELF.

TREATING YOUR
PARTNER LIKE
SHE'S IN THE
WAY IS THE
HEIGHT OF
ARROGANCE.



STILL,
ICHIKA-
SAN AND
DUNOIS-SAN
ARE WORKING
REALLY WELL
TOGETHER.

THE YEAH,
BOYS ARE IN
PER-
FECT
SYNC.



ICHIKA-
SAN,
FIGHT!!

ICHIKA!!
STAY
STRONG
!!



BUT
SOMEHOW,
IT JUST
DOESN'T
FEEL
RIGHT...





CONSIDERING
LAURA'S PER-
SONALITY AND
ATTITUDE, SHE'S
EXTREMELY UN-
LIKELY TO HELP
HOUKI.

SO WE TAKE
ADVANTAGE
OF THIS AND
TURN THE
FIGHT INTO A
TWO-ON-ONE
BATTLE.

WE'LL CALL
IT THE "TAKE
OUT HOUKI
FIRST"
PLAN.



Wink~

SORRY
I'M NOT
ICHIKA.



DON'T
MAKE
FUN OF
ME!!

WHA-?!



SO YOU'RE
PLANNING TO
CRUSH ONE
HALF OF MY
TEAM FIRST,
HUH?

HOW
POINTLESS.



SHE'S
RIGHT.

IF LAURA
TAKES ME OUT
WHILE CHARL
IS TAKING
DOWN HOUKI,
IT DESTROYS
THE PLAN TO
FIGHT HER
TWO-ON-ONE.

IT'S BEEN
TWO-ON-ONE
FROM THE
START!

INTENTIONALLY
SPLITTING UP
TO MAKE THIS
ONE-ON-ONE IS
ONLY HELPING
ME!!



HMPH.

CLOSE
COMBAT
AGAIN,
HUH?



AAAAHHH!!

THAT'S
WHY I
CAN'T
AFFORD
TO LOSE,
FOR
CHARL'S
SAKE!



VERY
WELL!

I'LL
USE THE
INSTRUC-
TOR'S CLOSE
QUARTERS
TECHNIQUES
TO SHOW
YOU JUST
HOW POWER-
LESS YOU
REALLY
ARE!!

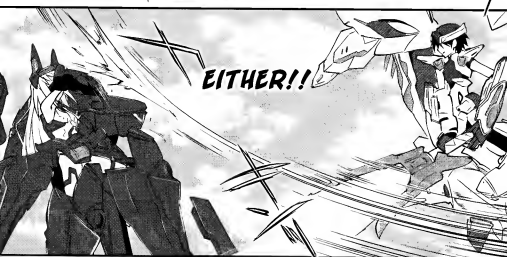




BUT I
CAN'T
AFFORD
TO LOSE

EVEN
WITHOUT
AN IS,
LAURA'S
REALLY
STRONG!

HER
COMBINATION
ATTACKS ARE
INCREDIBLY
FAST AND
FLUID...



EITHER!!



BUT
YOU'RE
STILL AN
AMATEUR.

IS
BATTLES
AREN'T AS
SIMPLE
AS THAT.

HMPH.

SEEMS
LIKE YOU
ACTUALLY
DO HAVE
SOME
STRENGTH
IN YOUR
SWING.

WIRE
BLADES
!!



WELL
DONE.

BUT HOW
LONG CAN
YOU KEEP
THAT UP?



DAMNIT!

I CAN'T
KEEP
TRACK
OF THAT
THING-!

NO!
IF I CAN'T
EVEN HOLD
HER OFF,
HOW CAN
I CALL
MYSELF
A MAN?!





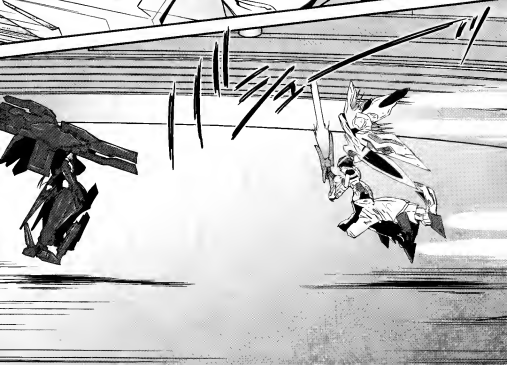
...
GUESS
IT'S
ABOUT
TIME FOR
ME TO
END
THIS.



THAT I
MOVED
TO LONG
RANGE!!

CRAP!

I WAS SO
FOCUSED
ON AVOID-
ING THE
WIRE
BLADE





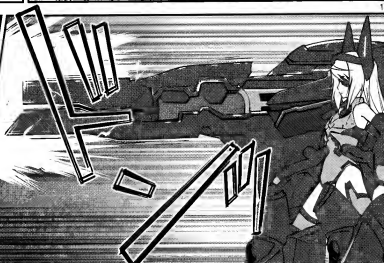




NOW TO
FINISH
YOU.



ANTI-IS
ARMOUR-
PIERCING
SHELLS!









SAVE THE
PRAISES
FOR AFTER
WE WIN THIS
BATTLE,
OKAY?

THINGS
ARE
ABOUT
TO GET
TOUGH.

YEAH,

LET'S
GIVE
HER A
TASTE

OF OUR
COMBO
ATTACKS!



I GUESS
ORIMURA-
KUN IS JUST
REALLY
TALENTED,
ISN'T HE?

WOW,
THAT'S
REALLY
AMAZING
...

HE
REACHED
THAT LEVEL OF
COORDINATION
AND TEAMWORK
AFTER BARELY
TWO WEEKS OF
TRAINING.



ICHIKA'S
OWN CO-
ORDINATION
AND TEAM-
WORK HASN'T
IMPROVED
MUCH AT
ALL.

HMMPH.

DUNOIS IS
CARRYING
HIM IN THAT
TEAM.



WELL...
I GUESS
YOU COULD
BE RIGHT.

EVEN IF
THAT'S TRUE,
DOESN'T THAT
MAKE ORIMURA-
KUN AMAZING FOR
BEING ABLE TO
GET SOMEONE
WHO WAS A COM-
PLETE STRANGER
JUST A FEW
WEEKS AGO TO
LOOK OUT FOR
HIM LIKE
THAT?

NO ONE
WOULD HELP
HIM IF HE
DIDN'T HAVE
SOME KIND
OF CHARISMA
AND CHARM
TO HIM.



THE IDEA
IS TO GET
THEM AS MUCH
REAL-WORLD-
BATTLE STYLED
TRAINING
EXPERIENCED
AS POSSIBLE
IN ORDER TO
PREPARE FOR
ANY POSSIBLE
ATTACK ON THE
SCHOOL.

THE
FRESHMEN
THIS YEAR
BROUGHT A
WHOLE BUNCH
OF 3RD
GENERATION
MODELS TO
THE SCHOOL.

STILL, THE
SUDDEN CHANGE
OF THE SCHOOL
TOURNAMENT
RULES TO MAKE
IT TEAM-BASED
PROBABLY HAS
SOMETHING TO DO
WITH THE INCIDENT
LAST MONTH,
DOESN'T IT?

I
SEE.



GET
STRONGER,
ICHIKA.

SO STRONG
THAT YOU
CAN USE HER
PLANS AS
A SPRING-
BOARD FOR
YOURSELF.



WITHOUT A
PERSONAL
IS, THAT
SEEMS
ABOUT RIGHT
FOR HER
LEVEL.

ON TOP
OF THAT,
DUNOIS'
STYLE IS A
HORRIBLE
MATCHUP
FOR HER.

ANYWAY,

SHINONONO-
SAN SEEMED
TO HAVE LOST
RATHER
EASILY.



L

IT'S LIKE
ROCK-
PAPER-
SCISSORS.





BUT
THAT'S
NOT
ENOUGH.

HMPH
...

SHE'S
STILL THE
SAME AS
EVER.

THINKING
THAT THE
STRONGER
HER ATTACKS
ARE, THE
STRONGER
SHE BE-
COMES.



BODEWIG-
SAN'S
PRETTY
STRONG,
HUH?



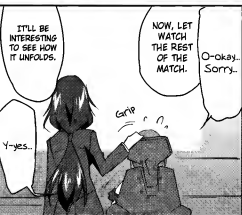
OH,
PLEASE!

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
TRY SO
HARD TO
PRETEND
NOT TO
CARE...

I HATE
BEING
TEASED
ABOUT MY
FAMILY
MEMBERS.



Gulp



IT'LL BE
INTERESTING
TO SEE HOW
IT UNFOLDS.

NOW, LET
WATCH
THE REST
OF THE
MATCH.

O-okay...
Sorry...

Gulp

Y-yes...



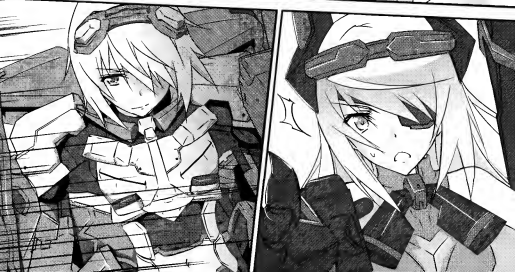
AH!

WELL,

WE'LL SEE
IF IT CAN
GO THAT
SMOOTHLY
...

ORIMURA-KUN
ACTIVATED HIS
REIRAKU
BYAKUYA!
IS HE PLAN-
NING TO BET
THE WHOLE
MATCH ON
ONE ATTACK?







IT'S
JUST AS I
THOUGHT!

YEAH!

ICHIKA!





THE AIC
REQUIRES
THE USER TO
BE ABLE TO
CONCEN-
TRATE ON
THE TARGETS
IT WANTS TO
AFFECT IN
ORDER TO BE
ACTIVATED!

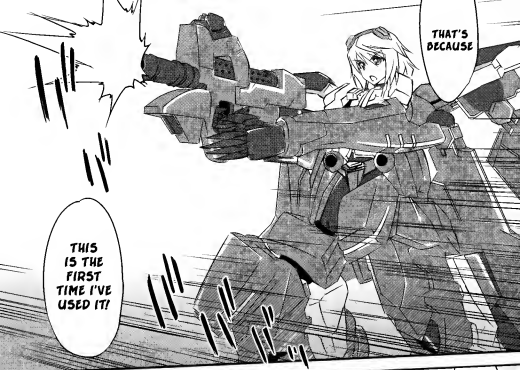


IT RUNS
OUT OF
ENERGY
NOW?!

WHA-?!







THAT'S
BECAUSE

THIS
IS THE
FIRST
TIME I'VE
USED IT!



WH-
WHAT-
...?!

ARE
YOU
SAYING

YOU
LEARNED
HOW TO
USE IT
DURING
THE
FIGHT?!

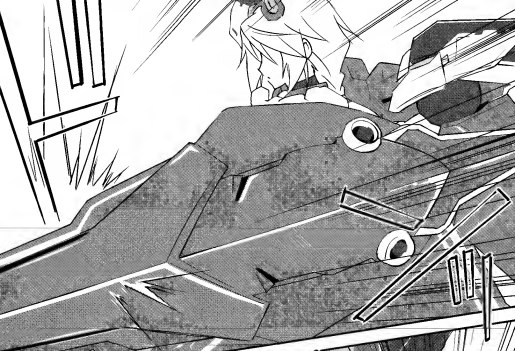


SHE'S
OUTHUSTLING
LAURA...

CHARL'S REAL
QUALITIES ARE
FINALLY BEING
SHOWN TO THE
WORLD.





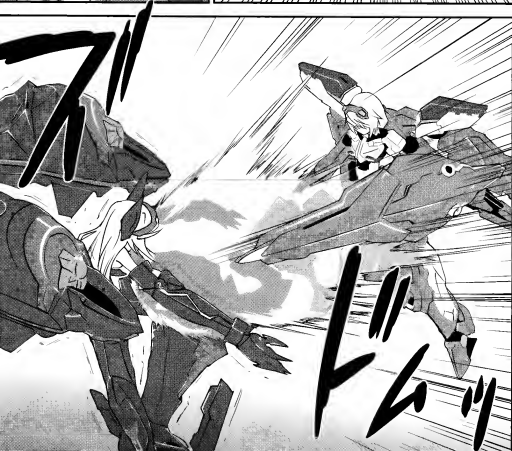


A black and white manga-style illustration. The top panel shows a close-up of a young woman with short blonde hair and goggles, looking down with a determined expression. A speech bubble next to her contains the sound effect "ハアアアアアアアアアア!!". The bottom panel shows a chaotic scene of mechanical debris and large, stylized black arrows pointing upwards, suggesting intense action or conflict.

AM
I...

GOING TO
LOSE IN
A PLACE
LIKE
THIS?

I AM
...!





BUT-



**I CAN'T
AFFORD
TO
LOSE!!**



**I CAN'T
LOSE!**

THAT WAS
THE FIRST
CODE I WAS
BRANDED
WITH.

GENETIC
STRENGTHENING
TEST SUBJECT
NUMBER
C-0037



I WAS
CAPABLE AND
TALENTED AND
SOON BECAME
RAISED TO THE
HIGHEST
LEVELS
POSSIBLE.

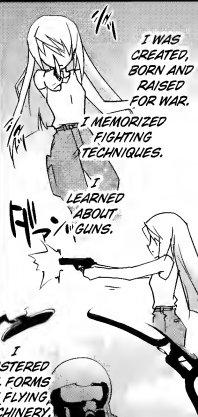
AND THEN
THE WORLD'S
GREATEST
WEAPONS
WERE BORN -
THE ARRIVAL
OF THE IS
MACHINES
CHANGED THE
WORLD.



I WAS
CREATED,
BORN AND
RAISED
FOR WAR.

I MEMORIZED
FIGHTING
TECHNIQUES.

I
LEARNED
ABOUT
GUNS.



I
MASTERED
ALL FORMS
OF FLYING
MACHINERY.

IT, EXPLOSIVELY
SPEEDS UP THE
TRANSMISSION OF
SIGNALS FROM
THE EYE TO THE
BRAIN, WITH THE
PURPOSE OF
SPEEDING UP RE-
FLEXES, THROUGH
TRANSPLANTING
NANO MACHINES
INCOMPATIBLE
WITH A NORMAL
HUMAN EYE.

IN ORDER TO
BE MORE
COMPATIBLE
WITH THEM,
I WAS GIVEN
ANOTHER
"TREATMENT"
- ODIN'S EYE.

WAS THE
SCORN,
SNEERS, AND
SCHADEN-
FREUDE OF
MY FELLOW
SQUAD
MEMBERS.

NO LONGER
BEING RE-
GARDED AS
ANYWHERE
NEAR THE
TOP, ALL I
HAD LEFT

BUT
BECAUSE
OF THIS
"TREATMENT"
MY LEFT EYE
CHANGED TO A
GOLD COLOR
AND BECAME
IMPOSSIBLE TO
USE NORMALLY.

THERE
WAS NO
RISK...
OR SO
THEY
SAID...

*SCHADENFREUDE: PLEASURE DERIVED BY SOMEONE FROM ANOTHER PERSON'S MISFORTUNE

AND THAT'S WHEN I WAS BRANDED A "FAILURE".

I FELL
FROM
DARK-
NESS
INTO AN
EVEN
DEEPER
ABYSS.

UNABLE
TO STOP,
TUMBLING
WITHOUT
END...

BECAUSE
OF THIS
ACCIDENT, I
FELL FAR
BEHIND THE
REST OF
THE WORLD
IN IS
TRAINING.

THAT WAS
WHEN I SAW THE
INSTRUCTOR...
WHEN I MET
ORIMURA
CHIFUYU.



AND THEN I
FOUND A LIGHT
THAT REACHED
MY EYE...



YOU'LL
PROBABLY
BE THE
STRONGEST
IN THIS
SQUAD
AGAIN IN
A MONTH
OR SO,
BECAUSE
I'M GOING
TO BE
TEACHING
YOU.



YOUR
RESULTS
REALLY
HAVEN'T
IMPROVED
MUCH LATELY,
BUT HEY,
DON'T WORRY
ABOUT IT,



AH-
I WANTED
TO BE
LIKE THAT.
I WANTED
TO BE LIKE
HER...

HER
STRENGTH,
HER
STRICT-
NESS
AND HER
STRAIGHT-
FORWARD
ATTITUDE -
SHE WAS
BURNED
INTO MY
MIND.

AND I...
FELL FOR
HER.

HER WORDS FELT
LIKE THE TRUTH
AND SHE WASN'T
KIDDING.
I FOCUSED
OBSESSIVELY
ON PRACTICING
WHAT SHE
TAUGHT ME AND
I WAS SOON
EASILY THE BEST
IN THE SQUAD
AGAIN...



HOW DID YOU
BECOME SO
STRONG?
WHAT MUST
I DO TO
BECOME THAT
STRONG?

- AND
ONE DAY,
I ASKED
HER

AND SO I
TRIED TO FIND
THE RIGHT
TIME TO TALK
TO HER IN THE
SIX MONTHS
BEFORE SHE
WAS DUE TO
RETURN HOME
TO HER COUN-
TRY



WHEN I
LOOK AT
HIM, I
UNDER-
STAND

JUST WHAT
STRENGTH
REALLY IS
AND WHAT
LIES BEYOND
IT-

I HAVE A
LITTLE
BROTHER.



THAT'S NOT YOU...
THAT'S NOT THE PERSON
I FELL FOR. YOU'RE
STRONG, STERN,
BEAUTIFUL AND DIRECT...
I WON'T FORGIVE HIM...
I WON'T ACKNOWLEDGE
HIM... THE ONE WHO MADE
MY BELOVED INSTRUCTOR
HAVE THAT EXPRESSION
ON HER FACE!
THAT'S WHY-



...
I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND.

YOU'RE
JUST
FINE
THAT
WAY
FOR
NOW.
BUT
MAYBE ONE
DAY YOU'LL
COME TO
JAPAN AND
I'LL SHOW
YOU...



THAT'S
RIGHT...
AND TO
DO THAT,

I
HAVE TO
SMASH HIM
UNTIL HE
CAN NO
LONGER
MOVE!

HE HAS
TO FALL!
THAT...
THAT MAN...
I MUST
CRUSH HIM
BY MYSELF
UNTIL
THERE'S
NOTHING
LEFT!

I NEED
POWER!!



[Do you
wish to
change
your-
self...?]

[Do you
desire
greater
power
...?]

[Is that
your
wish...?]



THE
ULTI-
MATE
POWER
!!

GIVE IT
TO ME!
PEER-
LESS,
UNCON-
TESTED,
UN-
MATCHA-
BLE

IS: Infinite Stratos

Chapter 18

Illustrated by
Yuuki Homura



Translation:
Abs

Cleaning &
Typesetting:
Dslight

QC:
Volandum